

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
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Balloon – and N.C. Science Festival – to Launch

RALEIGH - This spring, First Gentleman Bob Eaves' *Celebrate North Carolina* initiative has partnered with the North Carolina Science Festival to promote and support science, exploration and learning. The festival takes place April 13-29, 2012 with hundreds of family-friendly events all across the state.

"Science and learning have played such a crucial role in our state's success," said Eaves. "It's fitting that we hosted the first statewide festival in the nation and now the second one is a great opportunity to expose young people to scientific exploration. Encouraging them to pursue careers in science, math, engineering or technology is vital for our future."

The Festival will kick-off with a weather balloon launch from the grounds of the Executive Mansion in Raleigh on April 13. Local school children will join a team of UNC-Chapel Hill students to learn about the collection of weather data and countdown the launch.

The Executive Mansion will also host a North Carolina Science Festival public event – a *Green Garden Open House* - on Saturday, April 21, with tours of the nearly 5 acres of flower and vegetable gardens. Trained docents will answer questions and share information about the sustainable, green gardening practices in use, along with simple tips for home gardeners. The open house coincides with the grand opening of the Nature Research Center at the Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh.

Visit www.celebrate.nc.gov for more details.